



# CATAWBA COUNTY

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**Department of Social Services**

## PRESS RELEASE/PSA

### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **Supporting Our Children**

According to the NC Division of Social Services, every year there are over 300,000 North Carolina families who struggle to get by due to non-custodial parents failure to pay child support. With August being Child Support Awareness Month, there is no better time to announce the new child support debit card.

The new debit cards and direct deposit will replace the paper checks that were issued in the past. Debit cards will mean that child support funds are received much more quickly, easily, and safely. Child Support recipients will be able to use the debit cards at ATMs and retailers, similar to a regular debit card. Families will now have fast access to the money they need, without the fees on cashing a check.

Catawba County has a very strong Child Support program. Our county program currently serves 6,650 families, with a collection rate that is ranked 4th in the state. The Catawba County child support program is also ranked 5th in the state for overall performance and is one of only 11 counties in the state to that has met or exceeded all 9 elements of the state quality assessment.

The Child Support program of the Catawba County Department of Social Services has long been committed to helping custodial parents to collect child support. However, due to new legislation, non-payment of child support will no longer be enforced through the clerk of courts, making the services of the Child Support division even more important than ever.

The services of the Child Support program are open to any custodial parent with child support needs in Catawba County, regardless of income. The Child Support program has a collection rate of about 73%. They have many tools available to them to help locate and gain payment from non-supporting parents. Tools available to help collect include the ability to withhold income, intercept state and federal taxes, put a hold on a passport, and possibly even get licenses of any kind suspended. Most cases do not require harsh measures that would restrict employment, since the goal is to collect owed child support from the offender's income. Catawba County consistently ranks in the top 10 counties in North Carolina in its Child Support Performance Factors.

To get help with your court ordered child support, contact 828-695-4405 or 1-800-992-9457.

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